Atlantic herring (Clupea harengus) is widely distributed in the Northwest and Northeast Atlantic. Within the Northeast Atlantic, they are distributed from the northern Bay of Biscay to Greenland, and east into the Barents Sea.

Stock distribution is uncertain for Atlantic herring in this area. Many local populations with differing growth rates share similar habitats and may mix during certain times of the year. There is some evidence that western Baltic spring-spawning herring (Division 3a and subdivisions 22–24) and central Baltic herring (subdivisions 25–29 and 31, excluding Gulf of Riga herring) are mixing in subdivisions 24 (ICES 2017). Also a large portion of the herring in this area are North Sea autumn spawners (NSAS) (ICES 2017) which are considered elsewhere.

This report covers western Baltic spring spawning herring (WBSS) in subdivisions 20–24.

**ASSESSMENT**

**Strengths**
- Stock is well managed with precautionary reference points and control rules in place to prevent extensive overexploitation.
- Despite an SSB low in 2011 and very poor recruitment, stock has not declined below B_{lim}; suggesting management is achieving some of its goals.
- Gear used tends to have minimal bottom impacts and the fishery has little bycatch or discards.
- There is extensive scientific research and monitoring of this stock; both fishery dependent and independent.

**Weaknesses**
- Stock is in a low productivity state, with poor recruitment
- F is above F_{MSY} and Stock is between B_{MSYtrigger} and B_{lim}
- Even fishing at the advised level, stock is not expected above MSY B_{trigger} until after 2019.

**SCORES**

**Management Quality:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Strategy</th>
<th>Managers Compliance</th>
<th>Fishers Compliance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
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**Stock Health:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Health</th>
<th>Future Health</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**FIPS**

No related FPs

**MSC**

No related MSC fisheries

**RELATED LINKS:**
- European Commission (EC)
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)